

MUSEUM NEWS

SPRING 1960

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART
FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY



GREAT BRITAIN'S ART

Because of our common language, Americans have always been particularly aware of the literature of Great Britain. The written word is a heritage we all understand and accept with enthusiasm.

The art of Great Britain has always been closely associated with its literature. There is a close analogy between the classical and formal 18th century writing and English portraits; the romantic poets of the 19th century and English landscape painting. At the close of the 19th century literature and art were so closely allied that the artist and writer were frequently the same person. Rossetti, the Pre-Raphaelite painter, was also a poet; John Ruskin, the writer and critic, was also a competent artist.

The painting of Great Britain is frequently a literary or descriptive art, and for this reason has usually found ready acceptance, even among those unmoved by more purely painterly qualities.

The present issue of *Museum News* is concerned with Great Britain's art from the 18th to the beginning of the 20th century. Subsequent issues are planned to discuss British contemporary painting and water colors.

Otto Wittmann, Editor

MUSEUM NEWS

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART

FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

SPRING 1960 *New Series: Volume 3, Number 2*

COVER: SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. *The Young Gardener*. Oil on canvas. 50¼ by 39⅞ inches. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. George W. Ritter, 1955.

WILLIAM HOGARTH. *Portrait of Joseph Porter, Esq.* Oil on canvas. $35\frac{3}{4} \times 27\frac{7}{8}$ inches. Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1926.



GENTLEMEN AND GENTRY

The English painterly tradition was never more important nor beautifully expressed than in the 18th century. Prior to the Georgian Age, England preferred foreign artists such as Holbein, Van Dyck, and Kneller, or her wealthy aristocracy favored the Italian School they found when making the Grand Tour of Europe. It is therefore astonishing to find a complete artistic tradition emerging in the 18th century where none had previously been. Within this tradition the most evident art form of the century in quality and quantity was portraiture. This type of pictorial expression was fostered by a prosperous and growing middle class and by the refinement of social elegance to the utmost degree.

William Hogarth (1697-1764) is generally credited as the father of English painting, for in his paintings and engravings he is recognized as the first accomplished, native talent. He proclaimed the independence of English art, advised his countrymen to avoid the contamination of foreign training, and diligently recorded and satirized society. Although unappreciated and misunderstood by his contemporaries, Hogarth constantly championed native talent and sought reality by imitating experience. He observed the parade of life around him.



SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. *Portrait of Miss Jacobs (The Blue Lady)*. Oil on canvas. 36 x 28 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Gift of Mrs. Samuel A. Peck, 1953.

Hogarth believed that painting should tell a story or reform by improving the mind. These were his artistic desires, but he was obliged to paint portraits, and from these works he made his living. This was not unusual, however, for the principal demand of any artist at this time was that he be a good “face painter.” Landscape, conversation pieces, or sporting scenes may have been interesting and occasionally purchased, but they were never accepted as necessary to society as portraits.

In partial retirement between 1746-1753 because he was unappreciated, Hogarth’s defiant attitude toward society did not completely preclude his work in portraiture. Joseph Porter (ca. 1689-1749), a London merchant, sat for him sometime before this latter date. The boldness of Hogarth’s method undoubtedly appealed to Mr. Porter, who was rendered with colors muted in tone and rich in texture. The artist’s fluid brush is most noticeable in the embroidered vest, the kindly face, and the poised hands.

Dignity and integrity were indispensable to Hogarth’s portraits. In works such as the *Portrait of Joseph Porter*, he fostered the portraiture of succeeding generations, admonishing artists to seek the forthright representation of man. When Reynolds came on the scene and set the new fashion for elegance, Hogarth’s manner seemed quaint and out-of-date.

Outstanding among the artists of Georgian England was Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792), the man who combined Hogarth’s desire for a native artist with a suave, urbane manner. His mastery of portrait elegance attracted aristocratic sitters as no artist had previously done in England.

Of major importance to English artists was the formation in 1768 of the Royal Academy with Sir Joshua as its first President. This agency fostered the developed,

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. *Self-Portrait*. Oil on canvas. 30 x 25 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1926.



accomplished artist. Reynolds as President tried to elevate the worthy and talented painters to positions of public acceptance and honor. The Royal Academy and Reynolds did more than any other combination to achieve success, prestige, and lofty social position for the English artist. More meaningful, however, were Reynolds' efforts to establish a tradition of painting and artistic criticism where none had been. In the second half of the 18th century, the English portrait was more dominant than ever before.

Reynolds did not fully heed Hogarth's admonition to stay in England, portray English subjects, and paint in the English manner. Much of Sir Joshua's style is borrowed or eclectic. Around 1760 he admired the "classical" look of certain Italian painters, and he transferred their crisp line, cool colors and fictionalized classical dress to his canvases. Typical of this period is his *Portrait of Miss Jacobs (The Blue Lady)*, painted in 1761, an alabaster-like figure in a loose fitting gown.

The self-confident, mature Reynolds portrayed the English gentry with facile brushwork and flattering poses. Master Henry Hoare (1784-1836), scion of a London banking family, posed in 1788 as *The Young Gardener*. The "classical" manner used in portraying Miss Jacobs was discarded by Reynolds. Naturalism characterizes this work, one of the most delightful portraits of children he made in his later years. The springtime of childhood was never more handsomely preserved than in this masterpiece. Reynolds' keen sense of sophistication is responsible for the barrow full of flowers, a spade that does not dig, and a starched dress not to be soiled.

Sir Joshua Reynolds was never paid for his several self-portraits. They were intimate studies done for his own entertainment, or, more usually, they were given to purchasers of his regular fare. His *Self-Portrait* in The Toledo Museum of Art,

painted in 1788, is an inelegant work, not intended to impress. He does not gloss over the truth, but details it in dimpled chin and notched lip. It is an accurate remembrance of the man whose efforts are largely responsible for the painterly fashions of the Georgian Age.

The antithesis in temperament of Sir Joshua and his rival for greatness was his contemporary, Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788). Reynolds was an intellectual and well-read; Gainsborough was a lyric poet of nature and unlettered. While Reynolds' intimate friends included Dr. Samuel Johnson, Gainsborough preferred the companionship of eccentric musicians. One was first President of the Royal Academy, the other quarreled with the Academy often and refused to exhibit there for many years. And, although Gainsborough's portraits did not found a tradition as Reynolds' did, these two figures are the leaders of 18th century art.

About 1775 Thomas Gainsborough was at the height of his career. Streams of sitters came to his studio in Bath or London for his airy, somewhat feminine portrait treatment. As Reynolds succeeded in portraying the English male, Gainsborough excelled in rendering the female character. In his *Portrait of Lady Frederick Campbell*, painted about 1770-1775, his superior and delicate rendering is evident. This pompadoured lady clasping a favorite spaniel was stalked by misfortune. Married at fifteen years of age to Lord Lawrence Ferrers, she was ill-treated by her husband, who was hanged for the murder of his steward in 1760. In 1769, only a few years before Gainsborough painted her portrait, she married Lord Frederick Campbell, member of Parliament and Lord Clerk Register of Scotland. Her life ended tragically in 1807 during a fire at Coombe Bank, the family residence.

To Gainsborough, glamour was more than elegance or grandiosity; it was found in tenderness and modesty. In Lady Campbell's portrait the paint is rather thinly applied and sketchy in parts. A pensive mood adds to the gentility he captured in this English aristocrat. One is tempted to forget the identity of the sitter, believing that this work, characteristic of Gainsborough's best portraits, does not merely belong to the history of portraiture but to an artificial world of discreet manners we know no more.

Of all the various subjects of English 18th century painting, none is more charming or expressive of the milieu than the conversation piece. Generally a study of the gentry at ease in familiar settings, it is a more accurate gauge of the period than the formal portrait. The conversation piece is an 18th century development, and William Hogarth is largely responsible for the form, although he did not invent it. Sacheverell Sitwell, English critic and author, simply phrased it when he defined the conversation piece as a picture portraying "definite personalities in their intimate surroundings."

A fine, typical example of the conversation piece is *The Squire's Tea*, by Benjamin Wilson (1721-1788), painted about 1780. He was instrumental in shaping this form of painting to its highest degree, and at one time (1759) he was considered a better painter than Sir Joshua Reynolds. Sergeant-painter to the Royal Family in 1761, he was a scientist of some repute, also, who carried on a controversy with



SIR WILLIAM BEECHEY. *The Dashwood Children*. Oil on canvas. 71 x 71 inches. Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1948.

Benjamin Franklin concerning lightning rods. Today, Wilson has slipped into relative obscurity, his works are little known, and he is often confused with Zoffany, Wheatley, or Tilly Kettle.

The details of an interrupted afternoon tea ritual, here quite relaxed and casual, surround this unknown English gentleman. All the furnishings aid one in determining the date of the work. The costume appears to date from rather late in the century, while the drum teapot does not date earlier than 1770; more probably it was made about 1780. The gentleman has apparently returned from a ride, for his boots and riding habit are still worn. The viewer is invited to join in this quiet time with newspaper and dog. Through the open door into an adjoining room, one glimpses a Chippendale mirror and a carved table of earlier date than the painting. Wilson's brisk handling of this informal scene, his deft use of light and shade, deem this an excellent work of the period: a conversation piece of charming interest.



BENJAMIN WILSON. *The Squire's Tea*. Oil on canvas. 25 x 30 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches.
Gift of An Anonymous Donor, 1956.

The portrait tradition established by Reynolds in mid-century was continued by Sir William Beechey (1753-1839), a respected artist who lived beyond the Georgian Age and into the Victorian. In this age when all who could afford it had their portrait painted, competition among artists was keen. Hoppner, Lawrence, and Beechey were great rivals for the patronage of the wealthy or titled. Through avenues opened by membership in the Royal Academy, Beechey exhibited there frequently and became portrait painter to Queen Charlotte in 1794.

Beechey's equestrian portrait of King George III created a sensation among the appreciative, but the highwater mark of his career came in 1791 when he was commissioned to paint *The Dashwood Children*. His final style was climaxed when he painted Charles, Anna, George, and Harry—children of Sir Henry Watkins Dashwood—romping with their tolerant St. Bernard dog. Just as Reynolds so capably portrayed the age of childhood in *The Young Gardener*, Beechey shows he understood the gaiety of children at play, and could transfer it to a posed group portrait. The paint is applied in rather broad strokes in the background, allowing no room there for unnecessary details. This work typifies the talent and professional competence that endeared Beechey to the Royal Family and those who desired the "old mode" of Reynolds and others.

The Dashwood Children was originally hung in the panelled dining room of

Kirtlington Park, Oxfordshire, England, the family house built in the 1740's by Sir James Dashwood. As he was a man of considerable wealth, his home reflected the latest taste and design. The painting was enjoyed by the Dashwood family for 155 years, in whose collection it remained until acquired by the Museum.

London was the art center of England in the 18th century, but in Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland, a rival of the heirs of the portrait tradition founded by Reynolds painted his way to success and fame. Sir Henry Raeburn (1756-1823), the greatest Scottish artist, was born in Edinburgh and largely self-taught, perhaps spending a short time with Reynolds and studying two years in Rome. Although he had little opportunity for comparing his art with that of his contemporaries, he was satisfied with the distinction he earned painting the industrialists and Highland families of Scotland.

Raeburn's brash, straightforward style parallels the self-consciousness or hardy individuality always present among the Scottish people. His *Portrait of Lady Janet Traill*, painted about 1801, was done without benefit of preliminary drawings, as he preferred to paint directly on the canvas. The portrait is a prime example of understatement in oils, thin brushwork and essential strokes, that gives this work its broad, assured air. Only 100 years later in the bravura portraits of John Singer Sargent would the same facile brushwork be realized in portraiture.

The 19th century Romantic period dawned but did not immediately shadow the portrait painters who maintained the preceding century's models of Georgian correctness. Artists dominating the early years of the 19th century were Hoppner, Romney, and Lawrence—each eminently successful and vying with the other for patronage. It is thought Sir Joshua Reynolds named Thomas Lawrence (1769-1830) "the most promising genius he had ever met." Indeed, Lawrence's precocious drawings of friends, made when he was only seventeen years of age and already supporting his family, early indicated the great talent he would exploit so successfully. Little time had lapsed after Reynolds' death when Lawrence was offered the coveted post of Painter in Ordinary to the King.

Sir Thomas Lawrence aspired at one time to the "Grand Style" of painting, to emulate artists of the past in rendering historical or narrative subjects. The second decade of the century saw his work confined to what it suited, portraiture. His *Portrait of Sir Thomas Frankland* (1750-1831), executed about 1810-1815, was painted when the artist had no rival. This white haired, thin-faced gentleman was a typical educated aristocrat, distinguished as an author, scientist, botanist, and classical scholar. No tricks nor unique schemes were used by Lawrence in this half-length portrait. The figure of Sir Thomas Frankland is brought forward to the picture plane, while the costume and features are summarily but skillfully handled. In brilliant color and drawing the painting of Lawrence ranks him with the outstanding artists of the 18th century who raised to prominence the rendering of human features on canvas. Perhaps in more than anything else, the beauty and excellence of English art may be realized in the portrait.

Millard F. Rogers, Jr.



THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH: *The Road from Market*. Oil on canvas.
47½ x 67 inches. Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1955.

THE PASTORAL SCENE

Among the numerous categories of painting existing side by side with portraiture, landscape can be considered one of the finest forms which England's Age of Elegance produced. Although the landscape painter did not have a ready market for his canvases, and despite the fact that there was relatively no tradition of landscape painting in the country prior to the 18th century, contemporary England produced two first-class landscapists—Richard Wilson (1713-82) and Thomas Gainsborough (1727-88). Of these two men it was Wilson alone who concentrated his efforts in the landscape field.

Richard Wilson, born in Wales, was early sent to London to be apprenticed to a portrait painter. He soon must have discovered, however, that he was not destined to be a portraitist. Even before his sojourn in Italy (1750-57) he had demonstrated his competence in this area. The Italian trip proved to him that the calling of the landscape painter was a noble one.

The paintings that he saw and the painters with whom he came into contact in Rome also influenced him and contributed much to the formation of his mature style. He studied Titian and Poussin intensively, before discovering Claude Lorrain, who was to be the dominant influence upon his painting. Claude, the great French 17th century landscapist, had like Wilson come from the north to be swept away by the golden atmosphere of Italy and the grandeur of the Eternal City. These factors together with the artist's roots in the English topographical tradition determined the style which he was to follow for the rest of his life.

Upon his return to England, Wilson settled in London, entirely giving up portraiture so that he could concentrate exclusively on landscape painting. We can picture him, as some of his biographers have done, as an artist ignored by patrons and reproved by fellow artists because he did not follow the prevailing modes. Many are the stories which have been circulated by the artist's biographers concerning the artist's explosive temper and neglect of painting for sale. In his later years Wilson definitely was neglected, but it certainly cannot be said that he was entirely unpopular in these first years in London.

Wilson's painted work can be divided into three categories—the Italian views, the painting of the English country house and its setting, and his impressions of the landscape of England and his native Wales. *The White Monk*, given its title because of the small figure in prayer in front of a chapel in the middle distance, falls into the first of these classifications. This delightfully-composed, sunlit scene, undoubtedly reminiscent of one of the artist's trips taken outside Rome, cannot be positively identified, although Wilson may have had Tivoli in mind when composing it. Dating undoubtedly from his later English period, it preserves the freshness and spontaneity of a landscape painted on the spot. A direct observation of nature and painstaking composition of these observed details have been blended with a distinctly northern light and atmosphere to give us a highly original and fresh impression of this scene. In such pictures as *The White Monk*, Richard Wilson began a new tradition of English landscape which opened the way to Turner and Constable in the 19th century.

Thomas Gainsborough, who has been considered elsewhere in this issue as a portraitist, represents the other side of the landscape picture in 18th century England. In his formative years before coming to London the artist did a considerable amount of drawing from nature, and from the works remaining to us he undoubtedly saw and copied a number of Dutch landscapes from private collections. This interest in 17th century Dutch landscape, especially Ruisdael and Wynants, persisted even after his apprenticeship to the French engraver, Gravelot, in London

in 1740. These two influences, the silvery-gray tonality of Dutch landscape and the artful conventions of the French Rococo, combined with Gainsborough's wonderful knowledge of the Suffolk countryside to direct him away from the prevailing Mediterranean tendency seen in Wilson.

In Gainsborough's mature landscape creations these influences were blended together to form an utterly new and different lyrical style, seen at its best in *The Road from Market*, painted probably about 1766-67. This picture dates from the years when the artist had settled in Bath. Traces of Dutch influence are evident in such touches as the winding road which lead the observer's eye into the picture; the French flavor is betrayed in the coloring and some features of the draftsman-ship. We no longer think of such factors when looking at this lyrical composition, however, but see the English countryside transmuted by Gainsborough's genius in a style which looks forward to the landscape of the 19th century and to Impressionism.

Edward P. Lawson

RICHARD WILSON. *The White Monk*. Oil on canvas. Signed lower left: "W". 26 x 31½ inches. Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1958.





JOHN CONSTABLE. *Arundel Mill and Castle*. Oil on canvas. $28\frac{5}{8} \times 39\frac{5}{8}$ inches. Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1926.

LANDSCAPES OF FANCY AND FREEDOM

The Romantic artist stressed his own interpretation of nature. When he painted, he did not merely copy. Instead, he added to his acute observations a subjective response, appealing primarily to the emotions rather than to the rational. Like Beethoven, the artist was moving away from the classical tradition disregarding rules of formal presentation. The resulting breadth of direction and intensity available to the Romantic artist is indeed amazing. Each painter looked upon nature with fresh eyes. Each responded as an individual.

One of the most Romantic British painters of the 19th century was John Martin (1789-1854), who painted the *Destruction of Tyre*. The twenty-sixth chapter of *Ezekiel* had predicted the doom of Tyre as a terrifying demonstration of God's displeasure. Twice this prediction was fulfilled, but Martin represented the fall of new Tyre under Alexander the Great. This siege was as prolonged as it was violent. Thousands were either slaughtered, crucified, or sold as slaves. Such an event would present a great spectacle full of emotional appeal. However, Martin did



JOSEPH M. W. TURNER. *Venice, The Campo Santo*. Oil on canvas. 24½ x 36½ inches. Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1926.

not choose a military scene but derived his painting from the words, "I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and great waters shall cover thee." For the struggling painter, John Martin, this was an excellent opportunity to illustrate a great historic and Biblical epic. People would be interested in such a theme, and it was sure to attract public attention. Martin overlooked nothing; brilliant lightning streaks through the foreboding rain, giant ocean waves roll and buildings crumble.

Like a great stage director, Martin chose the height of a violent storm with its overpowering waves and dramatic lighting. The sky is permeated with a menacing red glow. Within a dynamic setting, little human events occur like stage props intended to arouse a sense of insignificance before the forces of nature. For an added theatrical touch, people fall from destroyed buildings, boats are upturned and one woman openly pleads for mercy. Martin creates a holocaust which involves and excites the spectator. The result is grandiose eloquence.

Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775-1851) likewise painted imaginative, exciting scenes; but he was not as fascinated with historic interpretations. His friends have said, "Effect was all he required. Mind gave the poetry of the picture."

When the sophisticated Turner was in Venice during his sixty-sixth year, he painted *Venice, The Campo Santo*, with all the poetry and vivid sparkle at his command. How different it is from the Venice of Guardi and Canaletto. Instead of recording a scene of nature, the genius of Turner's romantic spirit captured the majesty of a warm clear day. On the calm sea, boats glide along gracefully beneath an expansive sky covered with fast moving wisplike clouds. The moving



JOHN MARTIN. *The Destruction of Tyre*. Oil on canvas. Signed lower right: "J. Martin." 33 x 43 1/8 inches. Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1952.

cloud formations appear studied and have a vital quality.

If John Martin's scene of destruction shouted, Turner's scene of Venice whispered a symphony. Like watercolorists both painters handled their paint thinly in washes of color, but Turner gave plasticity to his pigment. His cloud formations became thicker layers of paint, and this variety of paint application heightened the effect of the clouds. Thinly applied paint allowed for nuances of color, and the Turner is rich in delicate variations. The Adriatic Sea shimmers and has a dream-like sense of suspension and reflection. Even the architecture of Venice seems transcendental and secondary to the theme of open space and brilliance. The effect is light, airy and full of vitality.

John Constable (1776-1837) was not such a poetic painter. Being typically English, he avoided the intangible for the tangible. His painted world was limited to a few familiar locations. He was content with the countryside that he knew and loved. Above all else he was honest and direct. His quiet Romantic spirit did not need historic grandeur or foreign excitement. This gentle painter turned his back on the beautiful scene of Swanbourne Lake to paint *Arundel Mill and Castle*. He delighted in the intimacy of the old mill and the growing richness of the valley of the Arun. In his own surroundings, Constable found the healthy abundance of nature. His landscapes were full of a light which dazzled the eye and shimmered, because he wanted to paint "light, dews, breezes, bloom and freshness."

His ability to represent the effects of nature stemmed from his close contact with the English countryside. He insisted on painting outdoors, something not

attempted by most artists of his time. His friends said he was "constantly in the wild, plashy, wet, dripping woods during storm, rain and wind." Thus Constable directly observed nature in her changing moods and made many sketches. Like Turner, he was fascinated by the changing character of clouds. Turner, however, always added to his factual observations a poetic brilliance which did not interest Constable.

Arundel Mill and Castle was the last painting executed by Constable. It is a quiet scene, and yet it is permeated with light and air. Constable's brush darted about catching the immediacy and freshness of his scene. His light and moving touch constructed a physical texture of paint. White specks cover the canvas with a shimmer of light. Even in the shadows reflected light and bright dashes of color dance and play.

Turner avoided dark heavy areas and was less concrete. It is only natural that the Impressionists, such as Monet, would respond to the sparkle of Constable's canvas. They, like the French Delacroix, were greatly excited by Constable's animated surface. Thus, Constable became an important influence on European art.

To the English of the 19th century, however, Constable had a style which was not immediately appealing. They enjoyed Martin's concocted wild imagination and Turner's violent excitement. Constable was relatively unnoticed by the public. Turner had become a member of the Royal Academy at a very early age and Martin was never accepted as a member. Constable eventually became a member of the Academy later in life after many years of waiting. He himself stated his position in England when he remarked, "I said that John Martin looked at the Royal Academy from the Plains of Nineveh, from the Destruction of Babylon, etc. I am content to look at the Academy from a gate, and the highest spot I ever aspired to was a windmill."

Constable was Romantic like Martin and Turner because he was truly excited by the quiet countryside. He could paint no other way and still be honest to himself. The peaceful mill was as thrilling to Constable as the giant waves were to Martin. However, Constable did not idealize the mill or turn it into a picturesque and quaint scene.

Constable combined accuracy of observation with a sound knowledge of art history. He had formal training and greatly admired the meditative landscapes of Ruisdael, Claude and Hobbema. However, he brought to landscape painting a new vitality and love for nature. He wanted to free landscapes from artificial and contrived concepts to scenes of moving freshness and real life. As a true scientist, he had to know for himself how nature worked. He saw life as something more than poetry. It should be studied, analyzed and then represented.

Thus the Romantic landscape varies greatly. All these painters have an accuracy of observation characteristic of the English, but their final statement can be a boisterous extravaganza or a deeply felt scene of rest and quiet.

Charles F. Gunther

JAMES JOSEPH TISSOT. *London Visitors*. Oil on canvas. Signed lower left: "J.J. Tissot." 63 x 45 inches. Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1951.



PICTORIAL LITERATURE

Few periods in the history of English art produced more descriptive painting than the Victorian age. Today the anecdotal picture of the 19th century offends the modern eye and its abstract vision. Yet in its own time, it was precisely the art that told a story, one preferably rich in mood, romance, and picturesque detail, which inspired unqualified enthusiasm. Three paintings and a near life-size drawing, added over the years to the Museum collections, illustrate the taste of the Victorian

era, while also disclosing in one instance the development eventually instrumental in rendering this taste obsolete.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was founded in 1848 by William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Its art appears curiously quaint now; once it represented the revolt of a young and idealistic generation against the conservatism of its elders. The ambition of the Pre-Raphaelite was to replace the dull life of his middle class public with a world of heightened sensibility where reality merged with poetry. Drawing inspiration from literature, religion, and the proletariat scene, he painted his theme with scrupulous regard for detail, natural color, and realistic lighting, often illumining it with a moral fervor absent from English art since the Middle Ages.

One of the gentler voices amidst a chorus by no means notable for its restraint was Arthur Hughes (1832-1915), who received his training at the Somerset School of Design and the Academy Schools in London. After becoming acquainted with the Pre-Raphaelite leaders and with the ideas they published in their avant-garde periodical, *The Germ*, Hughes rejected the traditional Academy conventions, and created a new style of painting whose formative phase is represented in *Ophelia*.

The picture was done about the same time that Millais painted his own version of *Ophelia*, wherein the future Mrs. Rossetti, Elizabeth Siddall, was depicted serenely adrift on the River Ewell. It may be dated shortly prior to the appearance of both paintings at the Royal Academy Show of 1852, where Millais' entry produced a sensation that overshadowed the work of his younger friend.

Like all Pre-Raphaelite artists, Hughes stressed the imponderables of mood, sentiment, and psychology at the expense of formal communication. He expected his Victorian audience to interpret the painting with the aid of program notes supplied, in this case, by Queen Gertrude's dramatic account of mad Ophelia's death in *Hamlet*:

"There is a willow that grows aslant a brook (says the Queen to Laertes), that shows hoar leaves in the glassy stream; there with fantastic garlands did she come of cornflowers, nettles, daisies, and long purple—There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke; when down her weedy trophies and herself fell in the weeping brook."

Characteristically Hughes underplays the drama. He presents the haunted maiden arrested at that poignant moment when the tension between her past suffering and its imminent end is still unresolved. Her swaying figure, radiating an inner light, is an apparition of blond ocher and pale ivory against the green gloom of the watery sepulcher. She is about to turn and deposit her pathetic posies on the willow. She stays her graceful hand near the "envious sliver," while her transparent veil, afloat upon the hushed atmosphere, startles a small blue bird, perhaps interpreted by sentimental Victorians as symbolic of her departing spirit. As she turns, she transfixes us with what undoubtedly was intended to be a piercing glance of sweet despair. With the emotional climate of the 19th century no longer operative, all that remains for us is a pretty girl posing genteelly in a shady dell.

The twilight glow of aestheticism colors the decline of Pre-Raphaelitism,



ARTHUR HUGHES. *Ophelia*. Oil on canvas. Signed lower left: "Arthur Hughes." $37\frac{5}{8} \times 23\frac{3}{16}$ inches. Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1952.

producing a tone different from the fresh, naive splendor of its youth. Concern with symbolism, morbid fantasy, and hidden subject matter becomes the fashion. Spectral allegories such as those created by Rossetti and his friend, Edward Burne-Jones (1833-1898) lend the *fin de siècle* its familiar, bizarre hues.

A large-scale drawing of *Charity* executed by Burne-Jones in pencil and chalk sometime around 1865 presages the end. It is a cartoon for one of three church windows depicting the three Virtues; the windows' location at present remains unknown. The beatific figure of Charity stands flame-like upon the vanquished form of Avarice. The famous Pre-Raphaelite flowing hair and swaying stance are still present, but now a stiff pattern of lines seemingly transforms the figures into engraved metal shells devoid of animation. Charity's attenuated height and idealized face, the linear treatment of her robe and hair, her divine censer and halo, and the hell-fire consuming her hereditary enemy—all these reflect a mixture of concepts and affectations born from the artist's study of Botticelli and the Middle Ages.

The art of the ex-divinity student and Oxford intellectual, Burne-Jones, scarcely touched the bulk of Victorian society. This lucrative market remained to be exploited by another breed of artist—the genre painter. His existence was made possible by a fashionable upper class, an official Academy, and a large



WILLIAM ROTHENSTEIN. *Portrait of Charles Conder. Oil on canvas. Signed lower left: "Will Rothenstein, '92." 47 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 21 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1952.*

museum-going public, who wished to see in painting the reflected image of their own experiences and convictions. Distinguished in this field for his ability to please was the charming, continental James Joseph Tissot (1836-1902).

The life of Tissot reads like a film script. Friend of Degas and Whistler, boulevardier and successful Parisian painter, the witty Frenchman found himself incontinently embroiled in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 as a gentleman sharp-shooter, and later, as an officer in the ill-fated Commune of 1871, whose downfall ruined his career. Emigrating to London, he straightaway fashioned another sensational career for himself as painter and illustrator of London high-life, became the darling of society, and after a tragic love affair with a married lady who appears discreetly veiled in his later pictures, he turned to religion and devoted his old age to painting biblical scenes—as penance, one presumes, for a gay life richly misspent.

For all its photographic exactitude, Tissot's *London Visitors* of 1874 breathes an air of immediacy, and evokes the sense of a pleasant hour recaptured from the past, which would make a real photograph of the event seem stale by comparison. Three smartly-clad tourists and their picturesque guides stand casually on the Corinthian porch of the National Gallery in London. The guides in their long blue overcoats, yellow stockings, brown leather girdles, and white neck-cloths are boys from the Orphanage of Christ's Hospital, founded by Henry VIII in 1552. In the foreground the russet-bearded gentleman in tweeds, bearing umbrella, courier bag, and guidebook, looks up something which has captured everyone's interest. His lady companion, bemuffed and dressed in a grey and green striped surcoat and dark gown, catches our eye and loftily directs our attention with her umbrella toward Trafalgar Square. In the background hacks pass along St. Martin's Place, while above, the steeple clock of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields discloses that life for these folk will forever remain fixed at 10:33 of a dappled London morning.

The reaction against narrative painting was already gaining ground in the 70's; but it was not until the 80's, spurred on by James A. McNeill Whistler and his declaration "Art for art's sake," that the English artist's concern for the formal properties of a picture once again began to outweigh his interest in telling a story. Some of this concern appears in the *Portrait of Charles Conder* by William Rothenstein (1872-1945), dated 1892. The artist painted his friend Conder—a now little-known painter, but once famous for his furious fits of work and prolonged periods of play—as a flat, Whistlerian pattern of greys and blacks, relieved by a shallow perspective background of dark green and ochre bands. Only the fact that Rothenstein was an incisive draughtsman and enamoured of portraiture softens the severity of this basically stylized and ascetic work. The cunning Conder is represented in stove-pipe hat and form-fitting overcoat, gazing dubiously at us from under hooded eyelids, as he pauses in the act of going through a door. He is a penetrating study of exquisite elegance and fawn-mustachioed disdain, but otherwise his pictorial world is as abstract and formal as the Japanese print whose influence it clearly reflects.

Rothenstein's work was a local inflection of the more revolutionary French Impressionism which gradually grew to dominate English art at the end of the century. The latter, in turn, was but the vanguard of a still more abstract and specialized art that was soon to make its appearance on the scene.

John N. Flaizik

BRITISH OIL PAINTINGS ACQUIRED SINCE 1939

- Alexander, Norman (1915-) *Work in Progress*
Anonymous (c. 1585-1590) *Queen Elizabeth I*
Beechey, Sir William (1753-1839) *The Dashwood Children*
Bicat, Andre (1909-) *Portland Bill*
Bowen, Denis (1921-) *Nocturnal Image*
Clough, Prunella (1919-) *Lorry with Ladder*
Evans, Merlyn Oliver (1910-) *Interior with Red and Green*
Feiler, Paul (1918-) *Lamorna Harbor*
Gainsborough, Thomas (1727-1788) *The Road from Market*
Gear, William (1915-) *Summer Landscape*
Gore, Spencer (1878-1914) *Mornington Crescent*
Grant, Duncan (1885-) *Sussex Farm*
Harris, Tomas (1908-) *Almond Trees, Majorca*
Heron, Patrick (1920-) *Pink Table with Lamp and Jug*
Hitchens, Ivon (1893-) *Hut in a Wood*
Hitchens, Ivon (1893-) *Arched Trees*
Hughes, Arthur (1832-1915) *Ophelia*
John, Augustus (1879-) *Still Life, Flowers on a Chair*
MacBryde, Robert (1913-) *Sliced Cucumbers in a Dish*
Martin, John (1789-1854) *The Destruction of Tyre*
Methuen, Lord (1886-) *Brympton Deversey, Somerset*
Nash, Paul (1889-1946) *French Farm*
Nicholson, Ben (1894-) *Ides of March*
Nicholson, Winifred (1893-) *Lilies and Moonlight*
Peploe, S.J. (1871-1935) *Still Life with Fruit*
Piper, John (1903-) *Rocky Valley, North Wales*
Reynolds, Alan (1926-) *Cheveley Well, Suffolk*
Reynolds, Sir Joshua (1723-1792) *The Young Gardener*
Reynolds, Sir Joshua (1723-1792) *Portrait of Miss Jacobs*
Richards, Ceri (1903-) *Music Room*
Rossetti, Dante Gabriel (1828-1882) *The Salutation of Beatrice*
Rothenstein, Sir William (1872-1945) *Portrait of Charles Conder*
Scott, William (1913-) *A Memory of Corot*
Sickert, Walter R. (1860-1942) *Rio da San Polo, Venice*
Sutherland, Graham (1903-) *Thorn Trees*
Tissot, James Joseph (1836-1902) *London Visitors*
Tunnard, John (1900-) *Painting, 1944 (gouache)*
Wilson, Benjamin (1721-1788) *The Squire's Tea*
Wilson, Richard (1713-1782) *The White Monk*
Wood, Christopher (1901-1930) *Drying Nets, Treboul Harbor*
Yeats, Jack Butler (1871-1957) *Another Chance*

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART

OFFICERS

Harry E. Collin, *President*
Harold Boeschstein,
First Vice President
J. Preston Levis, *Second Vice President*
Blake-More Godwin,
Third Vice President
W. Sinclair Walbridge, *Secretary*
Richard R. Johnston, *Treasurer*
Otto Wittmann, *Director*

TRUSTEES

John D. Biggers
Harold Boeschstein
Harry E. Collin
John K. Davis
Howard P. DeVilbiss
LeRoy E. Eastman
James P. Falvey
Blake-More Godwin
Richard R. Johnston
George M. Jones, Jr.
Frank L. Klobb
Milton Knight
Marvin S. Kobacker
Robert G. Landers
J. Preston Levis
Jules D. Lippmann
George P. MacNichol, Jr.
John E. Martin
Mrs. C. Lockhart McKelvy
Carl R. Megowen
George W. Ritter
W. Sinclair Walbridge
Ford R. Weber
Otto Wittmann

HONORARY TRUSTEES

The Most Rev. Karl J. Alter
Ward M. Canaday
Ralph E. Carpenter
Bartlett E. Emery
William W. Knight
William E. Levis
Carroll L. Proctor
Carl B. Spitzer
Frank D. Stranahan
Robert A. Stranahan

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

John D. Biggers, *Chairman*
W. Sinclair Walbridge, *Secretary*
Harold Boeschstein
Harry E. Collin
Blake-More Godwin
Richard R. Johnston
J. Preston Levis

ART COMMITTEE

Otto Wittmann, *Chairman*
John D. Biggers
Harry E. Collin
Blake-More Godwin

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Harry E. Collin, *Chairman*
John D. Biggers
Bartlett E. Emery
Blake-More Godwin
Richard R. Johnston
William W. Knight
Otto Wittmann

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

John E. Martin, *Chairman*
John D. Biggers
Henry R. Bloch
Harold Boeschstein
Ward M. Canaday
Harry E. Collin
Howard P. DeVilbiss
Richard R. Johnston
George M. Jones, Jr.
Milton Knight
Marvin S. Kobacker
Frank J. Koegler
Robert G. Landers
William E. Levis
Jules D. Lippmann
George P. MacNichol, Jr.
Carroll L. Proctor
John T. Rohr
Robert A. Stranahan

STAFF

Otto Wittmann, *Director*
Millard F. Rogers, Jr., *Assistant to the Director*
Robert G. Tillotson, *Administrative Assistant*
Leonard Urbanski, *Accountant*
William Hutton, *Assistant Curator*
Rudolf M. Riefstahl, *Assistant Curator*
Charles F. Gunther,
Supervisor of Art Education
Sanford W. Brandom, *Supervisor of Music*
Emma Leah Bippus, *Art Instructor*
James K. Barbee, *Art Instructor*
Nancy Corwin, *Art Instructor*
Judith A. Dewey, *Art Instructor*
Wilhelmina Dommerich, *Art Instructor*
Ann K. Horton, *Art Instructor*
Frederick J. Kline, *Art Instructor*
Lavern E. Moll, *Art Instructor*
Norman Schulman, *Art Instructor*
W. Selden Washington, Jr., *Art Instructor*
Walter D. Yoder, *Art Instructor*
Jane Green, *Music Instructor*
Muriel L. Toppan, *Librarian*
Richard N. Gregg, *Designer*
Hazel G. Vossler, *Membership Secretary*
Betty Bennett, *Appointment Secretary*
Kenneth H. Brockseker, *Superintendent*
George F. Hartman, Jr.,
Assistant Superintendent
J. Arthur MacLean, *Curator Emeritus*

MUSEUM HOURS

9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Tuesdays through
Saturdays
1:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. Sundays, Mondays
and Holidays

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART

BOX 1013 • TOLEDO 1, OHIO

NONPROFIT ORG.

U. S. POSTAGE

PAID

TOLEDO 1, OHIO

PERMIT NO. 86



*THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART
has served as a great community cultural
and educational center in the fields of art
and music since 1901.*